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AUTHOR Wright, Jacqueline
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ABSTRACT

The SEEDS (Service, Education, Economic Development, Science), Inc. program was co-founded by the author as an interdisciplinary project to extend learning experiences with similar-age students from various countries, cultures and backgrounds. The year-long curriculum focuses on the range of South African student and societal experiences. This paper describes subject specific activities for individuals and collaborative groups. Interdisciplinary project ideas are also presented. (EH)

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SOUTH AFRICA: A NATION IN TRANSITION

A S.E.E.D.S. " Food for Learning" Curriculum Module

Submitted by Jacqueline Wright

To

The United States Department of Education
Center for International Education
Fulbright Hays Seminars Abroad Program
and The African-American Institute

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S.E.E.D.S. FOOD FOR LEARNING CURRICULUM MODULE - SOUTH AFRICA: A NATION IN TRANSITION

Abstract

The **S.E.E.D.S. Food for Learning Program** is a global educational initiative that blends participatory and cooperative learning activities with team teaching and traditional classroom instruction.

The goal of this pilot program is to produce a replicable learning environment in which the participating students are able to:

- improve their academic achievement levels;
- develop a respect for people-to-people interaction and an appreciation of the lifestyles and cultures of others; and
- deepen their understanding of themselves while enhancing their self esteem and confidence.

Rationale

Nelson Mandela's visit to the United States after his release from prison was received with great interest by students in New York City and throughout the United States. Student awareness of South Africa and its struggle with apartheid remains keen. In addition to favorable recognition of the name "Mandela", US students of all races share an unmistakable support for the struggle of the South African majority - especially its youth - to end apartheid. We contend that a student-centered examination of South Africa's history and its post-apartheid challenges will serve as a " launching pad" for further learning. That is, by building on the existing interest of many of our young people, educators can help students " extend their study of South Africa" into an awareness of both global relations and human relations.

The **Food For Learning** initiatives are enhanced by extended learning experiences involving study about, and communication with similar-age students from various countries, cultures and backgrounds. This curriculum will focus on the range of South African student and societal experiences. It will be taught over one school year.

The South African thematic material will be presented to students via their standard subject areas (English, Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies, Art, Dance and Music) and reinforced through a variety of interdisciplinary special projects. These projects include:

- **Pen Pal Correspondence**
- **S.E.E.D.S. Start-A-Library(mini library) Project**
- **S.E.E.D.S. for Food: South African School-Based Gardens**
- **S.E.E.D.S. Video Documentary & Photo Journal**
- **S.E.E.D.S. Music, Art & Dance Programming & Extravaganza**

The **S.E.E.D.S. Curriculum** was developed by Jacqueline Wright, a New York City public school teacher and co-founder of Service*Education*Economic Development *Science (**S.E.E.D.S**.), **Inc**..

PHASE I - DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT PLAN

The planning phase of this project consisted of the following components:

- Preliminary Planning/Project Design -
  During May/June 1996, Ms. Wright devised preliminary plans with **S.E.E.D.S** educational colleagues.

- During July/August 1996, Ms. Wright Traveled to South Africa as a Fulbright Fellow and interacted with government officials, representatives of private Industry, educators, students and others. Based on observations and discussions with several South African teachers about their own program goals, several "sister schools" for the **S.E.E.D.S. Program** were identified.

- During Fall 1996, Ms. Wright and **S.E.E.D.S**. colleague, E. Anthony Mackall, refined the preliminary plan and completed the design of an instructional program that has both interdisciplinary and subject-specific components.

PHASE II - PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project involves both subject-specific and interdisciplinary project activities in which teachers team and collaborate and students engage in individualized and cooperative learning experiences.

The specifics of how teachers integrate the cultural exchange into curricular instruction is essentially structured during individual planning sessions. Following is a listing of suggested learning activities:

Subject Specific Activities

Social Studies: Utilizing atlases, globes, and maps students will first locate **and discuss Africa; then focus on South Africa. Students will explore the diversity of South Africa's peoples --*The four major indigenous groups are the Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Tsonga and Venda peoples. Most white South Africans are descendants of Dutch and British settlers. The Griquas are descendants of European and indigenous peoples intermarrying ; the Cape Malays are descendants of early Muslim travelers; and the Indians are largely descendants of indentured servants from India*--** as well as elements of its history and current events. Students will also compare and contrast the effects of apartheid on the strikingly uneven development in South Africa with that of the United States, a country still contending with the effects of slavery and racial discrimination.

English: US and South African students will exchange letters, photographs and establish pen pal relationships. Students will write/edit research papers, news articles and fiction about South Africa as well as relevant local topics. Students will also participate in several oral expression activities (e.g., short "public" speeches, dramatic readings and news interviews).

Reading: Students will read and discuss age-appropriate books that constructively capture the life styles and cultural diversity of US/NYC youth. Each student will prepare at least three book reports and also make recommendations of book title to be included in the "Mini-Library" collection (discussed below).

Science: Students will investigate South African weather and climate; terrain, vegetation, soil conditions and agriculture; as well as water quality and key health and ecology issues. Student teams will compare and contrast groups of the above items with issues and conditions here in the US.

Mathematics: Students will create and interpret charts and graphs for statistics such as population, rainfall, snowfall and life expectancy. Students will solve and help to create complex word problems that emphasize a presentation of the process(es) involved in their solution. The subject matter of these problems will consist of information from both the South African and US elements of the **S.E.E.D.S. Curriculum.**

In undertaking the foregoing activities, teachers will encourage students to pose and answer penetrating questions. The challenge will be for students to do more than learn lists of facts. They will challenge/help each other to examine and understand issues. Through group discussions as well as individual and collaborative research, students will learn about South Africa. The following are some of the questions and issued to be considered:

1. Key elements of South Africa's history that led to apartheid

2. What are the indigenous and immigrant groups that comprise South Africa?

3. The role of the African National Congress (a) during apartheid (b) post-apartheid

4. Life experiences of students (Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, Whites) in sister schools (a) during apartheid (b) post-apartheid

5. Examination of the lives of Nelson Mandela and Steven Biko

6. Mark Mathabane's view of life under apartheid

7. Developed Regions and Un-developed Regions (a) Social Structure (b) Business Ownership & Employment Issues (c) Land Tenure/Ownership Issues (d) The Role of Labor Unions: (a) during apartheid (b) post-apartheid

8. What are the biggest changes in South Africa since the transition to "majority rule" democracy?

9. What are the things that must change but have not yet changed?

10. What roles did/can South Africa play in Africa (a) during apartheid (b) post-apartheid?

Interdisciplinary Project Initiatives

Voluntary student groups of at least 10 students will work with a coordinating a teacher on each of the following four interdisciplinary initiatives.

Art, Music & Dance: Students will produce and be the core participants of a **S.E.E.D.S. Project Extravaganza**, celebrating South African culture through artwork, music and dance. During the process of learning about South African culture, students will have the opportunity to assess the similarities and cultural linkages between African/South African culture and their own (e.g., US, African- American, Latin American and Caribbean).

The following three initiatives involve the students in school- based "International" support efforts that make them a part of the subject and not simply observers.

Mini-Library Project: Students will assist in identifying and collecting a selection of fictional works as well as text and general reference books that they believe will be both interesting and informative to their South African counterparts. During the summer of 1997 approximately 1, 000 books will be shipped to South Africa and distributed among about three or four sister schools with scarce resources. These will include age-appropriate books about the life styles of youth in the US as well as books depicting this country's cultural diversity.

Seeds for Food Project: Working with their science teacher, and utilizing information on soil type, climate and dietary preference, students will identify the types of seeds best-suited for planting in South African school-based gardens. Assistance from Cornell University Agricultural Extension and Tuskegee University's Office of International Programs will be sought.

S.E.E.D.S. Project Video Documentary and Photo Journal: Working with a coordinating teacher, students will produce (plan, "shoot" and edit) a video tape documentary of the year long project. Still photographs and slides will also be utilized to record the entire effort. Photographs and slides from Ms. Wright's Summer 1996 South African trip will be made available for inclusion as the need arises.

Outline of Goals and Instructional Objectives

I. Students will analyze and interpret geography-related data to hypothesize, predict, and draw conclusions about the impact of geography on the development of South Africa

A. Student will use a variety of maps, globes, atlases and other geographic tools to:

(1) locate South Africa;
(2) identify its relationship to a selection of bordering countries and bodies of water (e.g. Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique) and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans;
(3) identify and compare distances between South Africa and a selection of African countries (e.g., Accra, Ghana , Cairo, Egypt and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania);
(4) identify and compare distances between South Africa and a selection of non-African countries and their respective continents (e.g., New York City, USA, North America, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil South America, Lisbon, Portugal and The Netherlands, Europe);

B. Students will learn about South Africa's land area and population and the varied terrain/topography and climatic conditions of its nine provinces;

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of sea level and average rainfall and snowfall;

Students will identify South Africa's wealth of of natural resources;

Sample Terms & Concepts: Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, temperate, climate, location, sea level, hemisphere, altitude, latitude, longitude, boundary, border, temperature, terrain, topography, continent

II. Students will appreciate the different cultures and significant contributions made by the peoples of South Africa over time

A. Students will learn the concepts of "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" peoples;

B. Students will analyze the contributions made by the indigenous peoples of South Africa - **First known inhabitants** and **Bantu speaking peoples**

C. Students will examine the history of non-indigenous European travelers to South Africa from 1500 - Present:
   1. **Explorers**: (a) Portuguese (b) Dutch (c) British
   2. **Settlers**: (a) Dutch (b) British
   3. **Colonizers**: (a) Dutch (b) British)

D. Students will briefly consider parallels/similarities in the European "explorations" of Africa and North and South America by reviewing :
   1. the drive for wealth via "water routes to Asia"
   2. the establishment of colonies and "new" societies

E. Students will learn about other non-indigenous peoples brought into South Africa by European settlers for economic, social, and political reasons:
   1. **slaves** (imported from Western and Northern Africa)
   2. **indentured servants** (imported from Asia)

Sample Terms & Concepts: indigenous, Bantu, population, nomad, forage, invade, explorer, water routes to Asia, Cape of Good Hope, settlement, settler, colony, colonizer, trader, Henry The Navigator, Vasco Da Gama, Christopher Columbus, trekboer, Boer, Afrikaner, Afrikaans, Shaka Zulu, resistance, incursion, slavery, indentured servants, descendant, culture, contribution, inhabitant, language

III. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the origins, philosophy and functions of apartheid

A. Students will learn about the policies and effects of apartheid

B. Students will examine apartheid through the experiences, struggles, and writings of the following organizations and people:

1. **Organizations:**
   a. African National Congress (ANC)
   b. Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)
   c. The Black Consciousness Movement
   d. South African Communist Party (SACP)
   e. South African Indian Congress
   f. The Azania People's Movement
   g. The South African Youth Revolutionary Council
   h. The Unity Movement of South Africa
   i. The Coalition of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and

2. **Individuals**:
   a. Hon. Nelson Mandela - President
   b. Walter Sisulu
   c. Bishop Desmond Tutu
   d. Steven Biko
   e. Hon. Winnie Mandela
   f. Chris Hani
   g. Hon. Frene Ginwala- Speaker House of Parliament (Legislative)
   h. Albertina Sisulu
   i. Joe Slovo
   j. Hon. Motlalepule Chabaku- Speaker House of Parl.(Judiciary)
   k. Nadine Gordimer
   l. Mark Mathabane

Sample Terms & Concepts: apartheid, social engineering, bantustans, homeland, Azania, sanctions, Freedom Charter, Coloured, Afrikaner, Inkatha Freedom Party, Freedom Front, National Party, uprising, Soweto, anti- apartheid, ungovernable, struggle, slavery, reconstruction, East Indian, European, Blacks, Robben Island, integration, segregation desegregation, majority rule

IV. Students will examine economic, political and social challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa

A. Students will discuss :

1. efforts to eradicate old social relations among the peoples of South Africa and the development of new relationships based on equality

2. problems with the realization of "majority rule"

3. ways to a more equitable distribution of South Africa's wealth and economic resources

4. efforts to promote peaceful means of conflict resolution between and among individual South Africans, youth as well as ethnic groupings

5. the provision of adequate housing, education and health care to all South Africans

6. the expansion of employment opportunities and the improvement of salaries, wages and labor conditions

7. environmental and ecological issues effecting development and industrialization

B. Students will analyze similarities and connections between "Ubuntu" in South Africa and Peace Studies/Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation strategies in the United States (students' personal experiences, etc. will be included in the examination)

C. Students will compare and contrast the challenges of post-apartheid South Africa with challenges in the United States after slavery, during the Civil Rights Movement and currently

Sample Terms & Concepts: Ubuntu, Truth & Reconcilation Commission, equality, majority rule, Civil Rights, Civil Rights Movement, Jim Crow laws, human rights, peer mediation, cooperative learning, democracy, socialism, capitalism, ecology, environmental racism, immigrant, emigrant, recycling, sustainable development, locally-based development, South African Constitution, National Assembly.

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